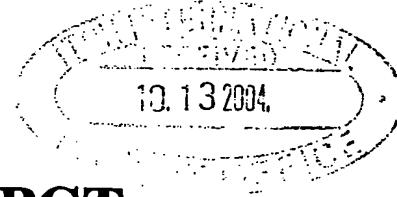


PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY



PCT

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

To: ITOH, Tadahiko
32nd Floor, Yebisu Garden Place Tower, 20-3, Ebisu 4-chome, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 1506032 Japan

Date of mailing (day/month/year)	12.10.2004
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Applicant's or agent's file reference R04078PCT	FOR FURTHER ACTION See paragraph 2 below	
International application No. PCT/JP2004/009040	International filing date (day/month/year) 21.06.2004	Priority date (day/month/year) 26.06.2003
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC Int.Cl' B41J2/045 , B41J2/055		
Applicant RICOH COMPANY, LTD.		

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. I | Basis of the opinion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Box No. II | Priority |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Box No. III | Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Box No. IV | Lack of unity of invention |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. V | Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VI | Certain documents cited |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VII | Certain defects in the international application |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VIII | Certain observations on the international application |

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/JP Japan Patent Office 3-4-3, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8915, Japan	Authorized officer DAICHI TAKAMATSU Telephone No. +81-3-3581-1101 Ext. 3261	2P 9415
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WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.
PCT/JP2004/009040

Box No. I Basis of the opinion

1. With regard to the language, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).

2. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:

a. type of material

- a sequence listing
 table(s) related to the sequence listing

b. format of material

- in written format
 in computer readable form

c. time of filing/furnishing

- contained in the international application as filed.
 filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
 furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.

3. In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.

4. Additional comments:

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WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.
PCT/JP2004/ 009040

Box No. V **Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims	1 - 15	YES
	Claims	_____	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	1 - 15	YES
	Claims	_____	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	1 - 15	YES
	Claims	_____	NO

2. Citations and explanations

Document1:EP 1270224 A (TOSHIBA TEC KABUSHIKI KAISHA) 2003.01.02,
whole document

Document2:JP 2003-175601 A (MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC INDUSTRIAL CO., LTD.)
2003.06.24, whole document

Document3:WO 01-021408 A (MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC INDUSTRIAL CO., LTD.)
2001.03.29, whole document

Document4:JP 2003-175599 A (MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC INDUSTRIAL CO., LTD.)
2003.06.24, whole document

Document5:JP 2001-301207 A (KONICA CORP.) 2001.10.30, whole document

Document6:JP 11-277744 A (SEIKO EPSON CORP.) 1999.10.12, whole document

The subject matter of claim 1 is neither disclosed in any of the documents cited in the ISR nor obvious to a person skilled in the art.

Claims 2-15 are dependent on claim 1 and as such also meet the requirements with respect to novelty and inventive step.

In particular, "Pressure generating means for discharging one or more of the ink drops other than an ink drop that is not followed by any more of the ink drops in a given printing cycle (the last ink drop) at an interval nearly equal to $(n+1/2) \times T_c$, where n is an integer equal to or greater than 1" is not disclosed in any of the documents.

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